In the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising
~~(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 49 to 57 and SEQ ID NOs. 103 to 122, or~~
(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NOs. 49 ~~to 57 and SEQ ID NOs. 103 to 122,~~ with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of a corresponding sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 1 to 3 ~~39 and SEQ ID NOs. 58 to 102~~.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising
(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 103, or
(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 103 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NOs. 58 and 59.

4. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising
(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 104, or
(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 104 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 60.

5. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising
(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO.105, or
(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 105 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 61.

6. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising

(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 106, or

(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 106 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 62.

7. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising

(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 107, or

(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 107 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 63.

8. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising

(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 50, or

(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 50 with additional N-and C-terminal fla nking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 5.

9. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising

(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 108, or

(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 108 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NOs. 64 to 67.

10. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising

(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 109, or

(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 109 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 68.

11. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising
(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 110, or
(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 110 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NOs. 69 and 70.

12. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising
(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 111, or
(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 111 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 72.

13. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 comprising
(a) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 112, or
(b) the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 112 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 73.

14. (Previously presented) The MHC class II antigenic peptide of claim 1 linked to a MHC class II molecule.

15. (Previously presented) A purified antibody composition which is selectively reactive to a MHC class II antigenic peptide according to claim 1.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously presented) A host cell containing a recombinant nucleic acid construct comprising a nucleic acid molecule operably linked to an expression vector, wherein the nucleic acid molecule encodes a peptide according to claim 1.

18. (Previously presented) The nucleic acid molecule of claim 17.

19-22. (Canceled).

23. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a MHC class II antigenic peptide and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, wherein the MHC class II antigenic peptide is selected from the peptide(s) of claim 1 or SEQ ID NOs 40 to 48 and SEQ. ID NOs 123 to 141.

24. (Canceled).

25. (Previously presented) A method for diagnosing RA comprising detecting in a patient serum sample the presence of one or more peptides selected from the group consisting of claim 1 or SEQ ID NOs 40 to 48 and SEQ. ID NOs 123 to 141.

26. - 30. (Canceled).

31. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising an antibody according to claim 15 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.